

# Washoe County School District Update

Reno City Council  
February 26, 2025  
Joe Ernst, Superintendent



# Leading with Core Values

Commitment to  
**Community**

Achieving  
**Academic Excellence**

Pursuing Goals with  
**Integrity and  
Transparency**



Teachers and Principals are the  
cornerstones

# 2024-25 WCSD At A Glance

## Student Demographics

Hispanic: 44%

White: 40%

Multiracial: 6%

Asian: 4%

African American: 3%

Pacific Islander: 2%

American Indian: 1%

17%

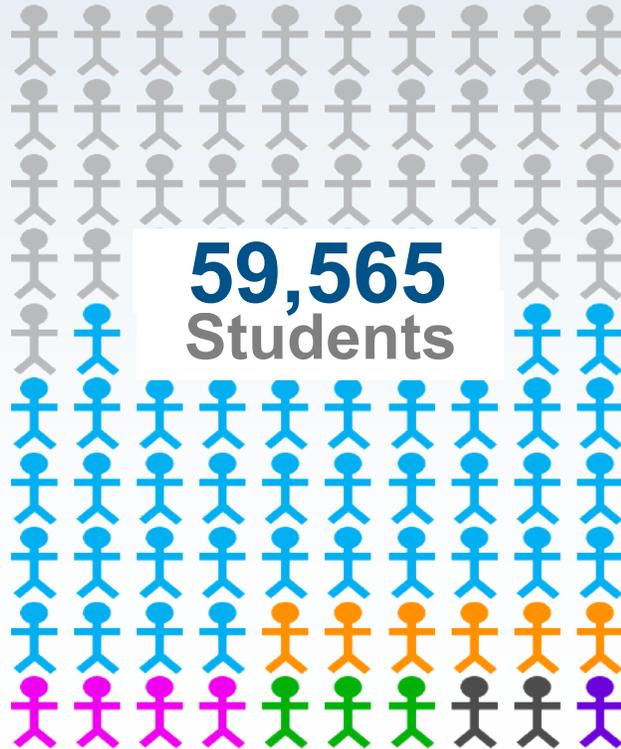
15%

64%

Special Ed

Multilingual

In Poverty



Languages spoken by students and families: 97

## Schools Served

Elementary 67

1 Adult

Middle 17

Specialized Schools 5

High 13

11 Charter



1864: First Washoe County School built

# WCSD At A Glance

Complex logistics in a rural, suburban, & urban district

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**6,316 square miles:** Larger than Connecticut

✂ 58<sup>th</sup> largest student population in U.S.

✂ Busses drive 20,000+ miles each day

**9,580 staff:** One of largest employers in Northern Nevada

✂ 3,399 teachers; 99% teach within area of licensure

✂ 70% of teachers have master's degrees or above

**44,000 meals served each day**

✂ Breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinner for many students

# Priorities as We Move Forward

## Culture

Strengthening our organizational culture built on strong relationships, high expectations, academic excellence, and continuous improvement

## Engagement

Decreasing absenteeism by increasing opportunities to engage students

## Achievement

Improving academic outcomes for ALL students

## Strategic Plan to Action

Implementing intentional, aligned, and integrated steps to effectively allocate resources and achieve our desired outcomes

# Increased instructional time through decreased chronic absenteeism

## Last School Year Chronic Absenteeism Gains

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**69%** Elementary schools made gains over last year's absenteeism rates!  
✂ **33 made reductions of more than 10%.**

**76%** Middle schools made gains over last year's absenteeism rates!  
✂ **8 made reductions of more than 10%.**

**50%** High schools made gains over last year's absenteeism rates!  
✂ **4 made reductions of more than 10%.**

# Improved Star Ratings

Star ratings have bounced back post-pandemic!

**53%** Improved their star rating scores  
✂ **7 additional 5-star schools!**

**21%** Earned a 4- or 5-star rating  
✂ **15 schools at 5-stars!**

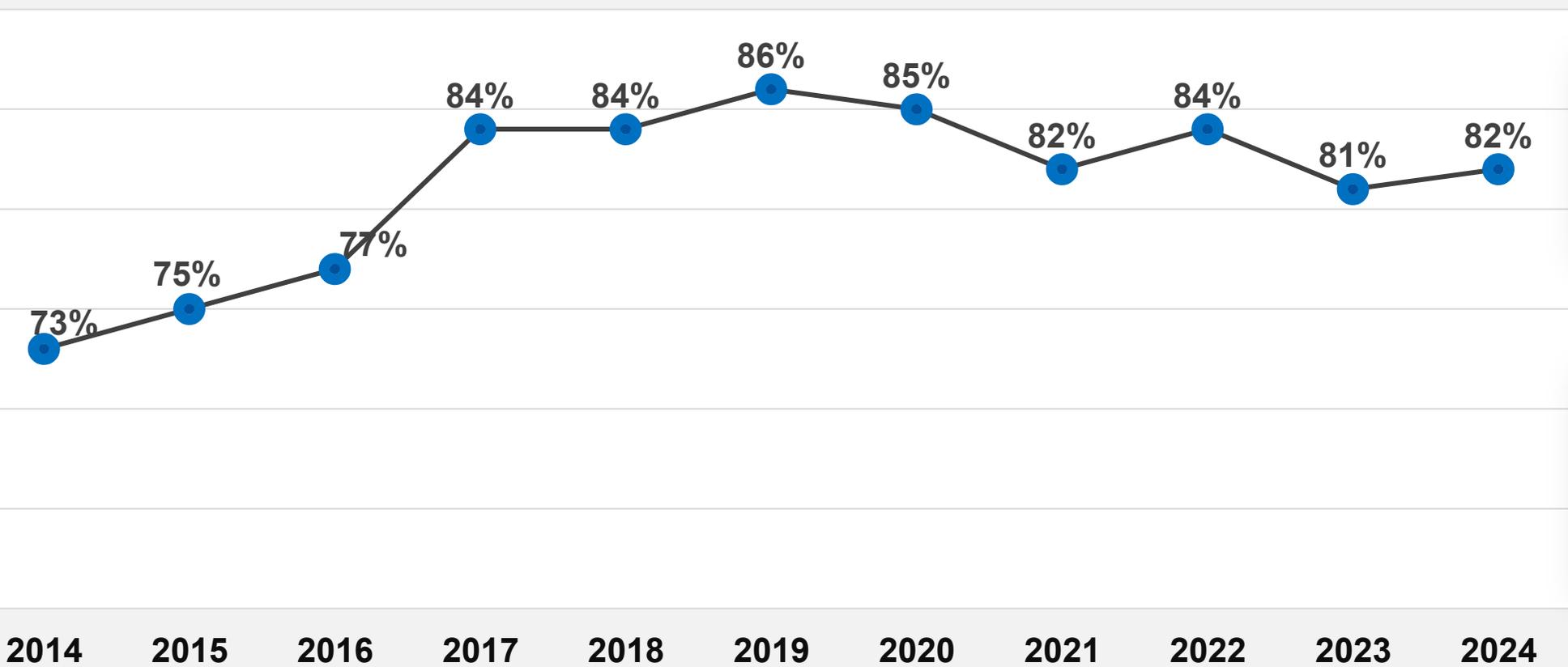
**57%** Schools improved Math growth  
✂ **27 schools improved > 10 points!**

**53%** Schools improved Reading growth  
✂ **17 schools improved > 10 points!**



7 WCSD High Schools  
in Top 25 Best Public  
Schools in Nevada!

# Portrait of WCSD's 2024 Graduates



10 Year Graduation Rate

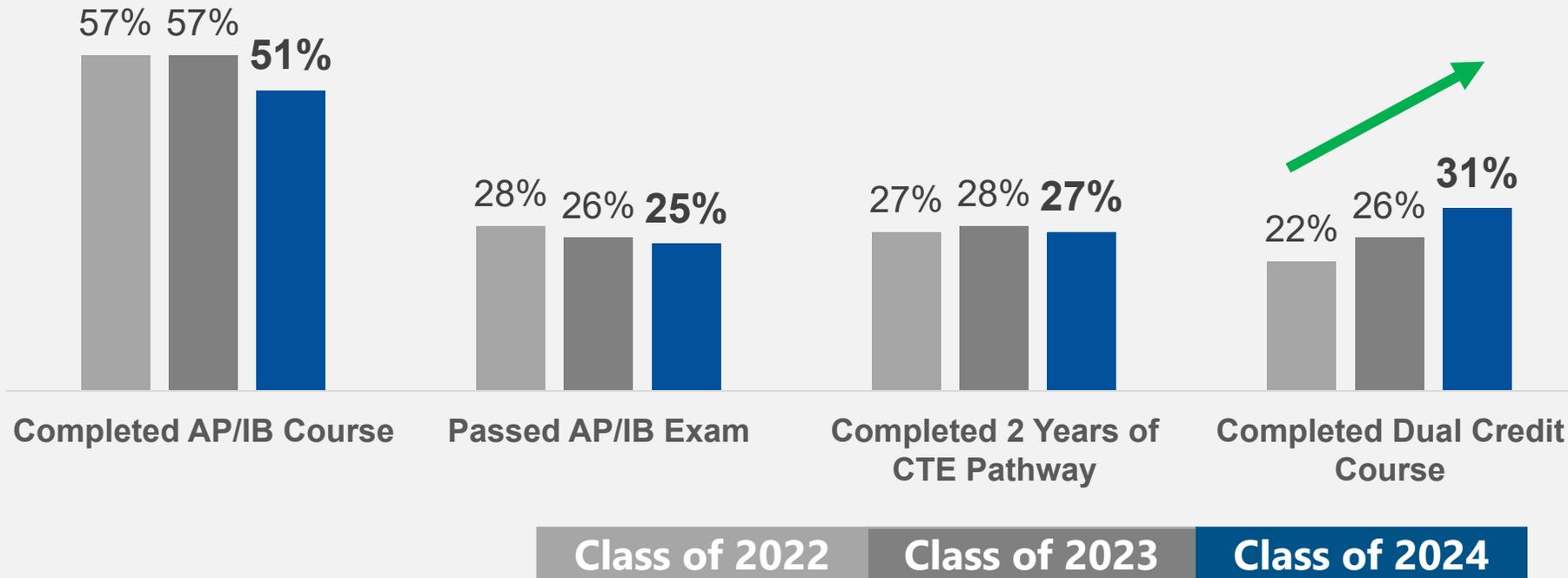
**+9**  
Percentage Points

AP/CTE/Dual/IB:  
Advanced Credits

**65%**  
Of graduates completed advanced courses

# Advanced Coursework Participation

65% of Graduates Earn Credit in AP, IB, CTE, or Dual Credit Courses!



23-24  
Concurrent Credits

**2,154**

College credits earned by 9<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> students on their high school campus with no additional costs to students!

# District Partnerships

**We Are Grateful to the Many Community Partners Providing Support to our CTE Programs in Workforce Development and Work-Based Learning!**

- ✓ Association of General Contractors
- ✓ BJ's Barbeque
- ✓ Bureau of Land Management
- ✓ Cathexes
- ✓ Charles River Labs
- ✓ City of Reno
- ✓ EDAWN
- ✓ Food Bank of Northern Nevada
- ✓ George W. Gillemot Foundation
- ✓ Great Basin Aviation
- ✓ Hamilton Medical
- ✓ High Sierra AHEC
- ✓ Intuit
- ✓ Jacobs Engineering
- ✓ KUNR
- ✓ Microsoft
- ✓ Northern Nevada Apprenticeship Coordinators Association
- ✓ Nevada State Police
- ✓ Northern Nevada Medical Center
- ✓ Pathways to Aviation
- ✓ PBS Reno
- ✓ Peppermill
- ✓ Q&D Construction
- ✓ Rail City Garden Center
- ✓ REMSA
- ✓ Reno Orthopedic Center
- ✓ Reno Youth Assistance League
- ✓ Renown Health
- ✓ Tesla
- ✓ Truckee Meadows Community College
- ✓ Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
- ✓ Truckee Tahoe Lumber
- ✓ University of Nevada, Reno
- ✓ Washoe County Sheriffs Office
- ✓ Washoe K-12 Education Foundation



# Internships and Workforce Development

## Current District-Level Internships

- ✓ Renown Health Medical Professions
- ✓ KUNR Youth Media Program

## ✂ More Internships Coming!

- ✓ Individual internships at each high school
- ✓ Group internships focused on:
  - ✂ Engineering
  - ✂ Multimedia Communications
  - ✂ Government and Public Service

[www.washeschools.net/internships](http://www.washeschools.net/internships)

**STUDENT INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**  
Sponsored by  
Washoe County School District  
**KUNR**  
Listen. Connect. Discover.

### KUNR Youth Media Program

Intern with KUNR to learn how to be a radio reporter! Students get hands-on experience from professional journalists to learn how to pitch, write, voice, and edit audio stories that matter to them.

To learn more about how the program works, visit:  
[kunr.org/kunr-youth-media](http://kunr.org/kunr-youth-media).

**Attributes of Applicants**  
Desire and commitment to attend all meetings. Collaborate, relate well to others, and manage time effectively to meet deadlines and balance school course load.

**Participation Information**  
**Who:** 11th & 12th graders  
**How:** By application  
**Length:** 1 semester  
**Credit:** 5 credit/semester  
**Time Commitment:** 60 hours

**Class Structure**  
There are 3 components to the class:  
• Weekly classwork in Journalism, Public Radio, Audio Recording, and Employability Skills. Create radio stories at KUNR Public Radio. Final presentation.

**Class Schedule**  
**Class Day:** Thursdays  
**Time:** 5:30-5:30pm  
**Dates:** Jan. 16-May 29  
**Location:** AACT/KUNR Public Radio  
Students will need transportation. If assistance is needed, email: [amedwards@washeschools.net](mailto:amedwards@washeschools.net)

**Interested in Participating?**  
Learn more & apply at [www.washeschools.net/internships](http://www.washeschools.net/internships)

**CTE**  
CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

**STUDENT INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**  
Sponsored by  
Washoe County School District  
**Renown HEALTH**

### Renown Health Explorers Program

Students explore Renown Health, learning from a variety of health and patient care professionals about career opportunities in direct medical care, diagnostics, management (patient information management), and human resources. Throughout the semester, required job skills & expectations of the healthcare field will be discussed, practiced & reinforced. Students will also develop a network of resources to access training & support after graduation.

**Attributes of Applicants**  
Desire and commitment to attend all meetings. Collaborate, communicate, and relate well to others. Manage time effectively to meet deadlines and balance school course load.

**Participation Information**  
**Who:** 11th & 12th graders  
**How:** By application  
**Length:** 1 semester  
**Credit:** 5 credit/semester  
**Time Commitment:** 60 hours  
Note: Students must provide proof of immunizations & attend an orientation with a parent or guardian.

**Class Structure**  
There are 3 components to the class:  
• A pathway learning project in the area  
• Employability skills assignments with a final presentation

**Class Schedule**  
**Class Day:** TBD (Either Tuesdays or Thursdays)  
**Time:** 3:30-5:30pm  
**Dates:** January-May  
Students will need transportation. If assistance is needed, email: [amedwards@washeschools.net](mailto:amedwards@washeschools.net)

**Interested in Participating?**  
Learn more & apply at [www.washeschools.net/internships](http://www.washeschools.net/internships)

**CTE**  
CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

# Expansion of Career and Technical Education



## Career & Technical Education Expansion

- **Gillemot Foundation** funding new Aviation Technology program at AACT
- **Intuit** Prosperity Hub & food truck program at Reed HS
- **Tesla** support for robotics, equipment, and manufacturing development
- **Truckee Meadows Fire, UNR, & Bureau of Land Management** to create fire science academy
- Additional programs planned for opening in School Year 25/26 include **Biomedical, Computer Integrated Manufacturing, Forensic Science, Law Enforcement, and Practical Nursing**
- Signature Academies & CTE open to all students

## Fire Science Academy at AACT

**1 of only 2 programs in the state!**

Students become eligible for wildland fire positions & fulfill partial requirements for municipal fire positions



# CTE Programs Districtwide

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## **Agriculture & Natural Resources**

- Animal Systems (Debbie Smith, North Valleys)
- Plant Systems (Debbie Smith, North Valleys, Wooster)
- Agricultural Welding, Power & Structure Technology (North Valleys)

## **Business & Marketing**

- AACT, Debbie Smith

## **Education, Hospitality & Human Services**

- Culinary Arts (AACT, Damonte Ranch, Debbie Smith, Galena, Incline, McQueen, Reed, Sparks)
- Family & Consumer Sciences (Spanish Springs)
- Hospitality & Tourism (Debbie Smith)
- Human & Social Services (Hug, Reed)
- Teaching & Training (Debbie Smith, Spanish Springs, Sparks)

## **Health Science & Public Safety**

- Biomedical (Debbie Smith, Reed)
- Emergency Medical Technician (AACT)
- Fire Science (AACT)
- Forensic Science (AACT, Damonte Ranch)
- Medical Assisting (AACT)
- Military Science / JROTC (all schools except AACT & Debbie Smith)
- Sports Medicine (Hug, Reno, Spanish Springs)

## **Information Technology & Media**

- Advanced Computer Science (Damonte Ranch, Hug, Incline, McQueen, Reno)
- Cybersecurity (North Valleys, Spanish Springs)
- Graphic Design (AACT, Reno, Spanish Springs)
- Multimedia Communications (Debbie Smith, North Valleys, Reno, Spanish Springs)
- Theatre Technology (Damonte Ranch)
- Video Production (AACT, Spanish Springs)
- Web Design & Development (North Valleys, Spanish Springs)

## **Skilled & Technical Sciences**

- Advanced Manufacturing Technologies (Hug, Reed, Sparks)
- Automotive Technology (Spanish Springs)
- Building Trades in Construction Technology (Debbie Smith, McQueen, Sparks, Wooster)
- Diesel Technology (North Valleys)
- Energy Technologies (Reed, Wooster)
- Engineering Foundations (Debbie Smith, Galena, Incline, Reno)
- Metalworking (Debbie Smith, Galena, Reed, Wooster)
- Welding Technology (Debbie Smith, Reed)

[www.washoeschools.net/cteprograms](http://www.washoeschools.net/cteprograms)

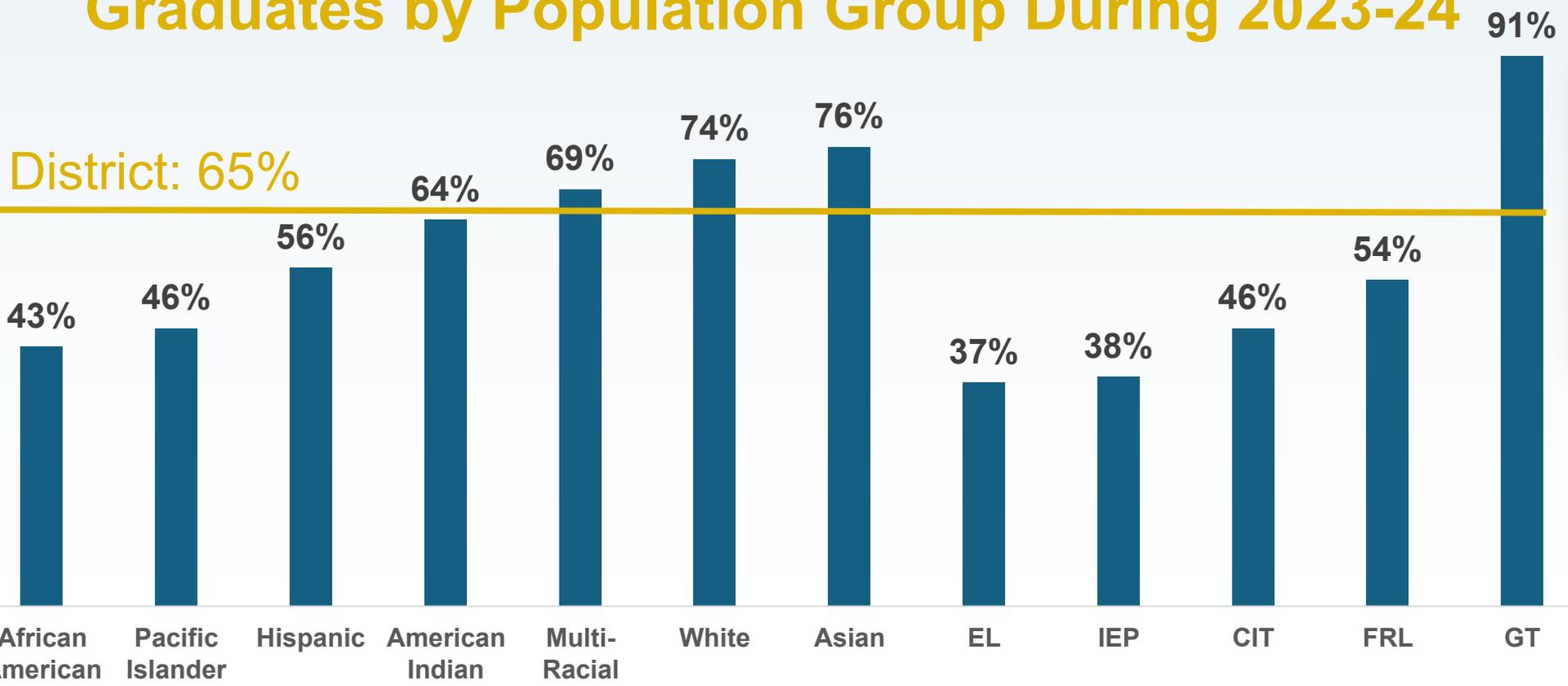


# Looking Ahead

## Our Future is Bright!

# Area of Continued Need

## Advanced Coursework Participation among 2024 Graduates by Population Group During 2023-24



District

65%

Of students earned credit in at least one advanced course

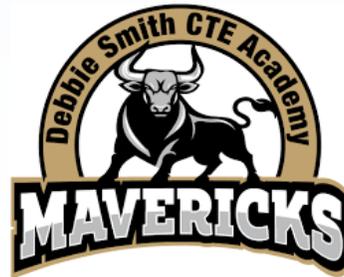
African American

43%

Of students earned credit in at least one advanced course

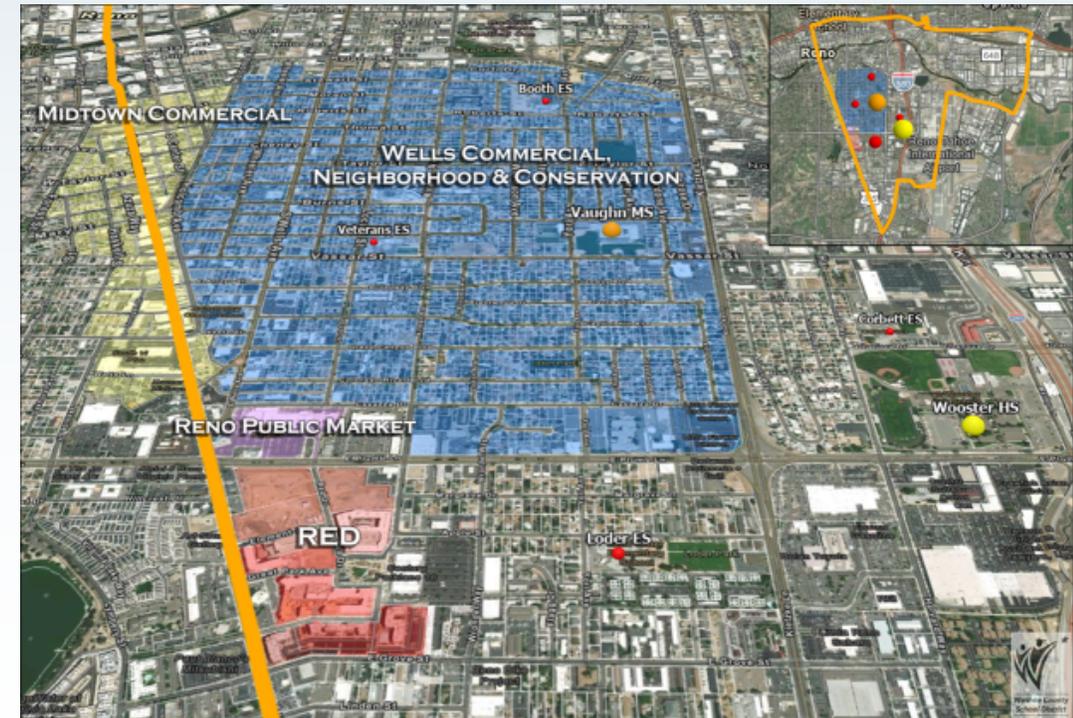
# Facility Modernization Plan

- 9 new schools have opened since 2019 with more than \$1 billion invested locally
- Debbie Smith Career Technical Education (CTE) Academy High School opens in August 2025



# Facility Modernization Plan

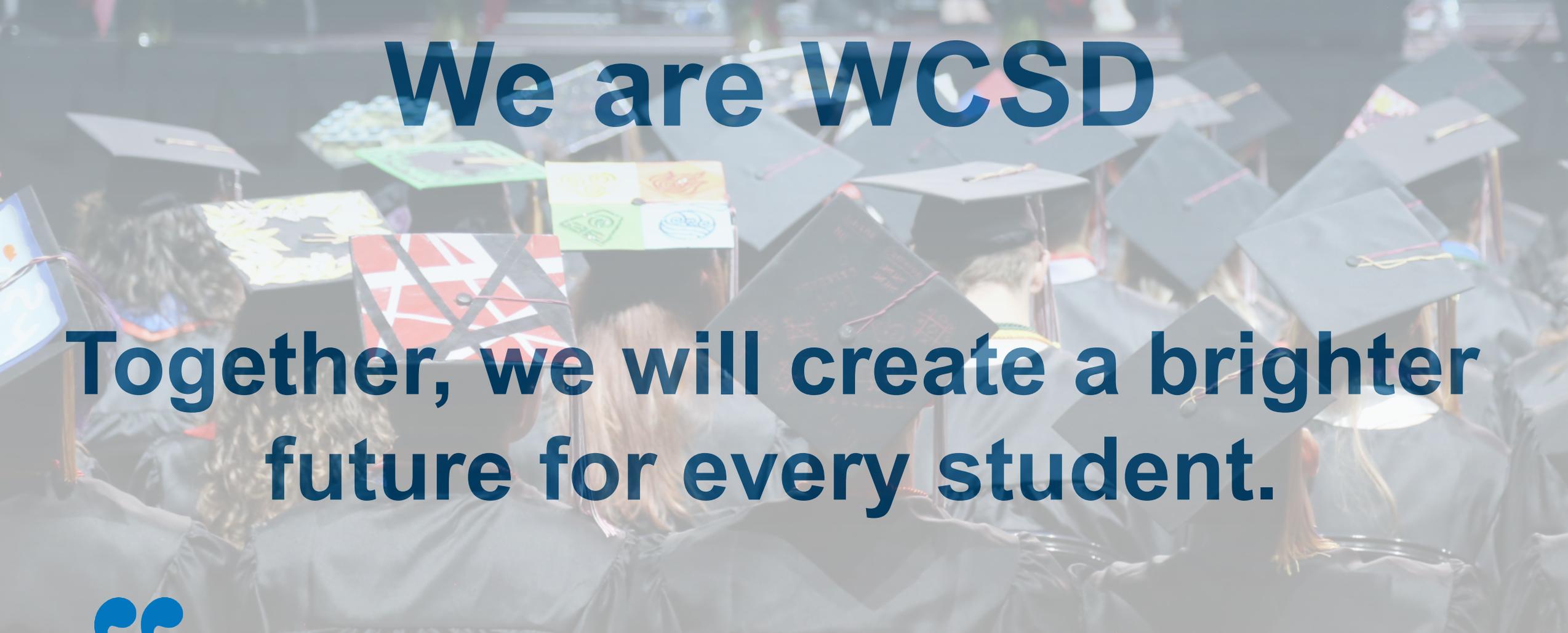
- Comprehensive plan based on **equity and efficiency**
- Public school facilities will revitalize communities
  - Corbett Elementary
  - Lemelson Elementary
  - Loder Elementary
  - Mathews Elementary
  - Pine Middle
  - Stead Elementary
  - Traner Middle
  - Vaughn Middle



# Facility Modernization Plan

- WCSD's commitment to our neighborhoods
  - ✓ Repurposed schools can serve our community
- Administrative Facility Master Plan
  - ✓ Improved outcomes for our schools
  - ✓ Demonstration of how we value partnerships in education





# We are WCSD

## Together, we will create a brighter future for every student.



Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

-Helen Keller